Rt. 12, Frederick, Md. 21701
10/26/75

Mr. Bob Kelley
Church Intelligence Committee
Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Bob,

Since we spoke I learned I have phlebitis, been hospitalized, returned home and have completed the printing of POST MORTEM, a few documents from the appendix of which I showed you. The book is being trucked here. I received two copies by airmail yesterday.

There was a meeting with Senator Schweiker and his legal counsel, Dave Marston. I liked them both, found the meeting encouraging, and since then have been disappointed as I hear the flapping of the wings of the wild geese.

When I speak like this and will tell you more, depending on how long I can hold up to being spread-eagled around a typewriter table because both legs must be elevated, I supposed that except for what you feel Mac might want to know I ask that this be confidential. I recognize Mac's position and understand, agree with it and regret that this is the way things are. The situation gave him no real choice. However, I also owe you straightforwardness.

I met with Schweiker and Marston the day I had to go to the doctor. Both were very kind. Dave, in fact, drove me to the doctor because by then I was having considerable discomfort getting around. We spent the morning together, the three of us alone, until the doctor would have been at lunch if I did not get to him promptly. I began by telling Schweiker that if he had not heard I have a reputation for bluntness, I hope he could understand that I felt I owed him no less. He thanked me and at one point presented four theories he holds and asked me to shoot them down. (I did.) When I left I was muchs encouraged. I believed Schweiker had changed his approach to the one I suggested. He assured me that he would protect what I told him of Post Mortem so it could appear in context and that he would be in touch with me again soon, either coming to my home or sending transportation to bring me to him.

Physically I was not able to go through my files for documents to show him but I had a few duplicates of the things I showed you, unfiled, and I took them. He seemed to be impressed. I told him enough of the rest.

When I had to go to the hospital I informed Marston in advance. In order to be able to talk freely I paid what I could ill afford, the difference for a private room. I let Marstem know the dial-direct number. I let him know when I came home. I've had no word from them. I did hear yesterday that they have Mark Lane chasing after something in either Mississippi or Tennessee. My source, told by Lane's people, did not remember which.

While I cannot and do not lay claim to greater wisdom or understanding than others, including Senators, I have spent more time on this subject than anyone else. I have spent much time thinking of what can and cannot succeed and I have a long history of having to try to undo the harm done by those who vary from nuts to self-seekers and publicity hunters not a few of whom consider hurting the government in itself a worthwhile end. From my thinking, my factual knowledge and these painful experiences I have reached conclusions more firmly validated by each bit of gimmickry, each cheap shot, each uninformed, out-of-context effort the motivations of some of which I have no doubt about.

My recommendation was that the subcommittee restrict itself to laying a solid basis for the need of a thorough investigation, the kind of basis a lawyer would use in court and that lawyers could not quibble about. I offered the belief that the continued chasing of conspiracy theories would further alienate Members and the major media, already turned off by so much utter nonsense and irresponsibility. I suggested that there had been a conscious and successful administration effort to divert the committee from its very important central function and that any real investigation of the JFK assassination could not be made by an overloaded committee whose remaining life was so short. I said that if Senators were interested in my opinion, I would hope that this committee would recommend that after it completes its present task it be continued as the committee to do the added investigation. My reasons included the knowledge the Members and staff acquired during their present work. Once a solid basis for an investigation was laid, I suggested, the positions of all the Members who favored it would be secure and the hangups of the major media would have been addressed. I also presented the other side, that asking Members to take a position based on what at best is theorizing was unfair to those Members. When I left I was under the impression Schweiker was in complete accord and that he would thereafter take this approach. I told him the approximate printing schedule of the book, offered him access to the proofs and a clear xerox of the appendix, and I really did expect these documents to be examined.

The next week Schweiker was in his district. I heard radio news reports in which he was quoted as saying he was following three possible conspiracy theories. At first I felt this might be what he regarded as political widsom, what would get headlines and build support. I no longer believe this.

He had outlined four conspiracy-theory approaches to me. After he finished with them I told them that all four come from my work but in a different context. I did not suggest that these were actual or successful conspiracies. My approach was "is this the way to investigate the assassination of a President, leaving all this and more uninvestigated?" I told him that while I still believe each of those at some point should be investigated, individually or collectively they were not a beginning point. I told him there was current relevance in some of this (avoiding specifying it not to tempt him into other headlines without substance) and that after there was a solid basis for an investigation and agreement on it I had much on this and other aspects I would be glad to make available. As politely as I could - and he seemed to appreciate it and not be in any way offended or resentful - I also suggested that without giving Members an absolutely firm factual case it would be asking too much of them to ask them to support a full investigation. I repeated that restricted to what would be essential evidence in any real homicide investigation I had and would give him a solid, irrefutable and documented case. (I have prepared Senate hearings entirely alone in the past, I have prepared evidence for court cases, I have other relevant experience, and I did have this book read by a lawyer whose work is reading manuscripts for major publishers. I believe that if restricted to this central evidence, the case as it stands in my work is entirely irrefutable and cries out for investigation.)

What I also said and believe is that what is most important today is that there not be further scapegoating or seizing upon minor angles and that no effort be made to pillory any one agency. I believe that today the right course is to begin with an examination of how the executive agencies worked. (Ultimately I would like to see this expanded into a study of the presidential misuse of presidential commissions.)

Of course if Schweiker should ask help of me and I can give it I will. I believe he is again bedded with those I regard as irresponsibles and self-promoters. But I will not have anything to do with these people or any approach I regard as irresponsible or not likely to succeed.

Schweiker caught me by surprise when he said they had men working on the CIA angles at the CIA and what should they do. My spontaneous response was to tell him to prevent the disappearance of what has not already disappeared by a) the broadest possible subpoenaes and a letter from the Majority Leader, to all the agencies in any way involved in the Warren investigation of for it. Apparently this had not been thought of. I told him of some files that have been destroyed and how I have the proof and he can get more. There are records of the memory-holing of computer tapes. I suggested that they ask for all the Oswald intercepts, mail and phone, while he was in the USSR, again not thought of. Later when I had time to think I made a few other specific suggestions to Marston. I don't know if they were followed. I was hospitalized before I could complete a letter incorporating recommendations of this nature. I was not joking when I also suggested getting all files of any kind or origin on me, including mail intercepts. If they did this I have not heard of it. I have copies of some and the CIA knows it. They are really uptight. My FOIA requests, dating back to 1971 (my proof goes back many years more) has been lied about and stonewalled. I am letting the CIA pull all the dirty stuff it wants to make a better case if and when I go to Court. The last requests should have been responded to long ago. Their response to my letter saying that if I did not receive an answer by 10/3 was to say that it would take until 10/10 for them to hear from one remaining "component" and they then needed ten more days to communicate the results to me. I noted this was longer than allowed or required but agreed to it with the understanding that the response would be full and complete and would be accompanied by this assurance. Since then no word from CIA. So, instead of rushing to court I've asked Jim Lesar, my lawyer, to nudge them a bit and add a new request under FOIA for some documents they will call "national security" and have and is not and in time may interest your committee. I'm digressing while I'm at the typewriter - in spirts - to inform you. I do not expect the CIA to confess interfering with my first-amendment rights or what it will, I am confident, lead to. I believe the potential of this is considerable and have part of it incorporated in the draft of a book I have not been able to edit since completing it in early 9/74. Part of what I am saying is that your investigation of the domestic is not really getting anywhere.

While I was in the hospital I received third-hand information to the effect that when Senator Hart was asked what could be done to help him his response was to say that getting certain people off his back would help. I know those people well and take encouragement from Hart's explicitness and to me clear understanding of these people. It leads me to suggest that if you know any of Hart's people you might see if they have any interest in what I can give them. While I have no idea of what Hart's attitude is I do take this comment to mean he is not going for any idle theorizing and that I like. If you decide to do this communicate whatever you consider appropriate. I will be home until my condition has improved except for several hours Friday afternoon when a friend will take me to and from my Washington doctor.

I have not yet decided when to release the book. I'm in touch with several papers in what I do not expect to succeed, an effort to interest them in ancillary rights. If this fails I'll want to make copies, once I have them, available to the wire services and a couple of major papers with their own syndicates. I'll not be able, financially or physically, to hold a press conference. If after a few days you have way of informing these kinds of reporters, I'll let them see the book on a hold-for-release basis.

What appears to have happened to the Edwards subcommittee is what I do not want to happen to yours. If they had the slightest idea what had happened or had conducted a really competent questioning of Adams there might have been other than what to now is a new futility. While it is not central, this line of inquiry could have been fruitful had ot not been based on the very dubious Lane version of an incident he and Garrison both exaggerated, lied about or both back in 1968. I was there and recall what Harrison then told me. There really is something there but not in this substitution for fact. It relates to the character of the official investigation. And subsequent lying. Dependence on the Lanes is almost certainly a solicitation of trouble if not disaster. Gotta stop. If you can do anything, thanks. Suggestions welcome. Best regards, Harold Weisberg